

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Action

Control: 13970

Rec'd: AUGUST 18, 1961

7:58 PM

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Info

FROM: BERLIN

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 251, AUGUST 18, 9 PM

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PRIORITY

ACTION DEPARTMENT 251, BONN PRIORITY 224; INFORMATION LONDON 158, PARIS 162, MOSCOW 151, POLAD USAREUR 143.

PARIS FOR EMBASSY, USRO, STOESSER AND MCGUIRE.

FOLLOWING IS ROUNDUP BERLIN SITUATION AUG 18:

1. EAST BERLIN: MISSION OFFICERS TOURING SOVSECTOR IN PRIVATE CARS WITH REGULAR US FORCES PLATES WENT THROUGH FOUR DIFFERENT ENTRY/EXIT POINTS; WERE STOPPED THREE TIMES WITH REQUEST FOR IDENTIFICATION. WHEN REQUEST REFUSED, SHORT CONSULTATION TWICE PRODUCED QUICK APPROVAL TO PROCEED. ON THIRD OCCASION, ENTRY PERMITTED ONLY AFTER VOPO MADE TELEPHONE CALL.

TWO LARGE TANK PARKS OBSERVED IN CENTER CITY, BUT NO ARMORED VEHICLES SEEN MOVING IN STREETS. UNIFORMED PERSONNEL STILL EVIDENT IN LARGE NUMBERS BUT FAR FEWER THAN EARLIER IN WEEK. SEVERAL STREETS CLOSED YESTERDAY OPEN TODAY, BUT APPROACH BRANDENBURG GATE STILL CUT OFF. MORE PERMANENT BARRIERS GOING UP.

WEST GERMAN VEHICLES DRIVING INTO EAST BERLIN NOT HELD UP; DRIVERS REPORTEDLY RECEIVE WITHOUT DELAY PASSES WHICH MUST BE RETURNED TO CONTROL PERSONNEL WHEN LEAVING SOVSECTOR. (PREVIOUSLY REGULATION TO RETURN PASS NOT ENFORCED). WEST BERLIN TOUR BUSES ALSO NOT DELAYED. THERE CONFUSING REPORTS RE WEST BERLIN VEHICLES WHOSE OPERATORS MUST APPLY FOR

PERMISSION TO ENTER EAST SECTOR AT THREE POINTS. SOME

DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR TIME PERIOD DENIED; OTHER DRIVERS

FORWARDED BY

DATE

9/21/61

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-2- 251, AUGUST 18, 9 PM, FROM: BERLIN

REPORTED THEY WERE TOLD PERMISSION CAN BE GRANTED ONLY WITH SEVERAL DAYS' DELAY; OTHER CARS APPARENTLY PERMITTED ENTER SOVSECTOR IF OPERATOR WORKS THERE. MINOR INCIDENTS REPORTED OF VOPO'S FIRING BLANKS TO SCARE OFF JUVENILES ON WESTERN SIDE.

2. REFUGEES: TOTAL NUMBER PERSONS WHO CROSSED BORDER SINCE AUG 13 AND REGISTERED AT MARIENFELDE WAS 492. THERE STILL REPORTS OF REFUGEES SWIMMING CANALS, CLIMBING WALLS, ETC. MOST SPECTACULAR WAS ACCIDENTAL TV COVERAGE OF RECENT ESCAPE BY VOPO WHO SUDDENLY BOLTED FROM POST AND ON WEST SIDE SOUGHT REFUGE BEHIND POLICE CAR.

3. WEST BERLIN: ACCORDING BERLIN RETAIL TRADE ASSOCIATION, HOUSEWIVES BUYING UP NUMBER CONSUMER ITEMS. THOUGH BUYING SPREE DOES NOT APPROACH PANIC, DEMAND ON CANNED GOODS, POTATOES, ESPECIALLY HEAVY. EXCEPT FOR POTATOES, WHICH TEMPORARILY IN SHORT SUPPLY. QUANTITIES OTHER FOODSTUFFS WHOLESALE STOCKS ENTIRELY ADEQUATE. WHOLESALERS BEING URGED STEP UP DELIVERIES IN ORDER MEET INCREASED DEMANDS RETAIL LEVEL.

LANDESZENTRALBANK STATED AUG 17, VOLUME PRIVATE TRANSFERS FUNDS FROM BERLIN HAD NOT REACHED ALARMING PROPORTIONS AND, IN FACT, LESS THAN LATE 1958 FOLLOWING KHRUSHCHEV ULTIMATUM.

BERLIN DGB CHAIRMAN SICKERT TOLD MISSION OFFICER S-BAHN BOYCOTT INITIATED YESTERDAY POCHGIP\* GOING ON SUCCESSFULLY. VOLUNTARY PICKETS CARRY SIGNS AT NEARLY ALL Y-BAHN STATIONS DECLARING "FARES BUY ULBRICHT'S BARBED WIRE." PICKETS INSTRUCTED NOT PHYSICALLY HINDER PASSENGERS FROM ENTERING STATIONS, BUT OTHER PASSERS-BY HAVE BEEN OBSERVED TRYING TO STOP THOSE WHO STILL TRY TO ENTER. SICKERT SAID HE REALIZED PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES THIS BOYCOTT, I.E., SUBSTITUTE TRANSPORTATION NOT CONVENIENTLY AVAILABLE, OVERCROWDED, MORE EXPENSIVE. SENATOR FOR INTERIOR INSTRUCTED HIS EMPLOYEES NOT TO USE S-BAHN.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF FEDERAL DGB

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-3- 251, AUGUST 18, 9 PM, EAST BERLIN

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WILL MEET BERLIN AUG 22. GROUPS WILL INSPECT SECTOR  
BORDERS IN MORNING, HOLD JOINT MEETING AFTERNOON.  
AUG 23 WILL BE CORNERSTONE LAYING CEREMONY FOR NEW BERLIN  
DGB BUILDING. ALTHOUGH UNDER DISCUSSION FOR LONG TIME,  
DECISION ON NEW BUILDING, WHICH ALMOST TOTALLY FINANCED  
FROM FEDERAL DGB FUNDS, TAKEN SINCE AUG 13.

LIGHTNER

ELP/22

\* AS RECEIVED.

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